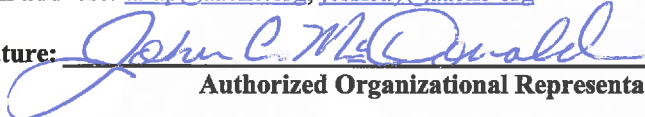




July 10, 2014

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Grants Management Specialist
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Mailstop # 7700 Bethesda
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Re: Attestation of Support for State of Arizona's Application
State Innovation Models: Round 2 of Funding for Test Assistance

1. **Name of Organization:** Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers
2. **Contact/Representative Name and Title:** Tara Plese/Senior Director of External Affairs
Jessica Yanow/Director of Women's Health Programs and Grant Administration
3. **Address:** 700 E. Jefferson Street, Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034
4. **Phone:** 602-253-0090 5. **Fax:** 602-252-3620
6. **E-mail address:** tarap@aachc.org; jessicay@aachc.org
7. **Signature:** 
Authorized Organizational Representative

Introduction- Attestation of Support

The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers (AACHC, dba Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers) hereby attests to its commitment to and active engagement in Arizona's application for Test Funding for the State Innovation Models (SIM) award. AACHC believes that Medicaid, the State's largest insurer, is an important lever for driving delivery transformation. In Arizona, the AHCCCS program has been a leader in health innovation and health policy. With steady and strong leadership, AHCCCS has successfully promoted numerous initiatives to transform the healthcare industry. The program's success has also relied on its roots as a public/private partnership. All of these factors, in addition to serving a critical mission, are reasons why AACHC supported Medicaid restoration and expansion in Arizona.

AACHC is equally committed to actively striving toward health delivery transformation to yield better health outcomes and lower costs. Accordingly AACHC believes it is essential to collaborate with the State of Arizona, both with AHCCCS and the Arizona Department of Health Services, to effectively improve population health and promote system reform from a payment and delivery perspective.

Organization and Role in System Reform

AACHC has served as Arizona's Primary Care Association since 1985 and strives to promote and facilitate the development and delivery of affordable and accessible community-oriented, high quality, culturally effective primary healthcare for everyone in the state of Arizona through advocacy, education and technical assistance. AACHC is committed to serving as a resource for organizations providing primary health care to the underserved, including Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics, Tribal organizations, behavioral health facilities, and others with a vested interest in the primary care safety net. AACHC comprises the state's largest network of primary care providers and is committed to working with a variety of partners to expand tools that health centers and organizations serving those in need can utilize to

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address the needs of their patient populations and improve health outcomes while continuing to demonstrate a cost savings. AACHC has strong local, state, regional and federal partners which enables it to leverage resources to accomplish the mission and goal of providing high quality, affordable, access to healthcare regardless of the insurance status of the people in the community it serves.

AACHC members provide comprehensive primary care services through an integrated physical and behavioral health model. AACHC's statewide membership of 37 organizations serves patients in 220 sites, 159 of which are FQHCs, across the state. AACHC provides technical assistance, a variety of educational opportunities for members, and advocacy services to its members. The Alliance also provides opportunities for peer networking with colleagues from other health centers. Specific peer committees provide a forum for sharing of best practices among members for optimal healthcare delivery.

Arizona's 19 FQHCs are located in 14 of the 15 counties in Arizona and last year served over 540,000 individuals throughout Arizona. Arizona's FQHCs provided almost 1.7 million patient visits in 2012. Of those patients, 92% of them had incomes of less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Services provided onsite at health centers included primary care and preventative services often including dental, pharmaceutical and behavioral health services. FQHCs are located in high-need areas as identified by federal and state governments and provide evidenced-based chronic disease management, patient education, behavioral health integration, and a provider team approach to achieve improved health outcomes. FQHCs most routinely provide services at a community-based clinic site, but services are also provided in school-based clinics and mobile units. Some health centers are designated specifically to serve homeless individuals or migrant/seasonal farmworkers and focus on developing services and resources specific to these special populations.

FQHCs have a diverse payer mix. Of the 540,000 individuals seen at Arizona's health centers last year:

- 29.2% did not have health insurance
- 40.3% had AHCCCS coverage
- .4% were enrolled with KidsCare
- 9.6% were Medicare beneficiaries
- 20.4% were covered by private insurance plans

FQHCs have been leaders of in establishing patient centered medical homes (PCMH) where multiple facets are patient care are integrated to better meet diverse needs of patients. Many of Arizona's FQHCs have been accredited as Patient Centered Medical Homes by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and several have achieved the highest level of accreditation. Arizona's FQHCs have Health Information Technology (HIT) capability and utilize Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems. In addition to the adoption of HIT/ EHR, strict federal reporting requirements allow CHCs to demonstrate that they deliver cost-effective care that improves outcomes and reduces health disparities. (Stanford Report 2012).

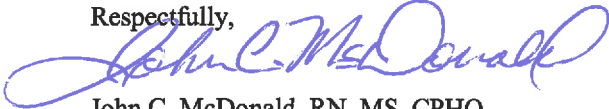
AACHC was an active partner in the Governor's effort to secure Medicaid Restoration and Expansion, with the organization and its members devoting significant time and resources to this effort. AACHC's Chief Executive Officer sits on the board of Arizona's Regional Extension Center, Arizona Health-e Connection (AzHEC) board. The organization's Senior Director of External Affairs sits on the State Medicaid Advisory Board. The organization's Director of Women's Health Programs and Grant Administration directs the Arizona Rural Women's Health Network. Other AACHC staff people participate in various statewide healthcare coalitions directed by the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), County Health Departments, and other coalitions driven by statewide healthcare organizations. AACHC was also a co-founder of a 600 member organization facilitated by St Luke's Health Initiatives called Cover Arizona with the intent of ensuring access to healthcare for Arizonans. AACHC is also the largest grantee in the state for the Navigator and Certified Application Counselor outreach and enrollment services. The Navigator Cooperative Agreement includes 18 partner organizations throughout the state focused on ensuring healthcare coverage for uninsured Arizonans.

Arizona's SIM Grant Application

Arizona has an active and engaged health care sector that provides quality care to Arizonans across the State. As we supported restoration and expansion of Medicaid in Arizona, we did so with the recognition that this added coverage could be leveraged to support initiatives in payment reform and health care delivery transformation. As AACHC has embarked on its journey to health reform, we have recognized that there is a need to connect to other initiatives within the State. Moreover, we have come to acknowledge that efforts like addressing super-utilizers, inappropriate use of the emergency department, recidivism in the criminal justice system, care coordination for Arizona's Native American population, among others, cannot be successful if we are not connected and working as one system of care.

AACHC firmly believes that this proposal breaks down the siloes that currently exist between physical and behavioral health, between providers and payers, and reconnects all of us to the consumers and family members that we all strive to serve. The work that AACHC is doing is furthered by the SIM process and we are committed to that process and to a positive result.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John C. McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent.

John C. McDonald, RN, MS, CPHQ
Chief Executive Officer